

# Substance Use Service (SUS) Team Piloting @ WRHN Midtown ED

## Now in Soft Launch:

- The Substance Use Addictions Medicine Consult Service (SUS) is currently operating in the ED / EAU only. Referrals will broaden as the pilot grows, with plans to be campus wide.

## What is it?

- A dedicated addictions medicine consult service in the ED designed to provide rapid medical and psychosocial support for patients who use substances.

## Who is the Team?

- Danielle Coffin, MSW, RSW
- Dr. Sukhmeet Bedi, MD, DABPN (Addiction Psychiatry), DABPM
- Vince Carruthers, Clinical Manager

## What do we do?:

### Physician:

- Assess and diagnose substance-use disorders
- Provide withdrawal management, medication support (e.g. OAT)
- Develop treatment plans and harm reduction strategies
- Support follow up planning and coordination

### Social worker:

- Screen for substance use and complete psychosocial assessments
- Support care alongside addictions physician
- Assist with discharge planning from ED and initiating process for admitted patients
- Help facilitate care and liaise with hospital teams
- Connect patients to community supports and address social needs (housing, income, food, safety)

## Who Do We See? (Patient Population)

- During the pilot we will see patients who may benefit from substance use related assessment, harm reduction, or withdrawal support
- Appropriate for both acute concerns and longer-standing substance use

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## When to Call us:

- Patients presenting to the Midtown Campus ED may be referred to the Substance Use Service if they meet **any** of the following:
- **Concerns related to substance use**, including:
  - opioids
  - alcohol
  - stimulants
  - benzodiazepines
  - polysubstance use
- **Patients seeking support** for:
  - withdrawal symptoms or withdrawal risk
  - acute substance-related harms
  - cravings management
  - harm-reduction education or planning
  - relapse prevention
- **Patients expressing interest** in:
  - medication-assisted treatment (e.g., buprenorphine, methadone, naltrexone, acamprosate)
  - connecting with outpatient or community addictions services
  - safer-use strategies or counselling
- **Clinician-identified benefit**, such as:
  - repeated substance-related ED visits
  - substance-related complications (infection, injury, mental health concerns)
  - uncertainty about community supports or next steps

## Why is SUS Team being launched?

- Improve patient outcomes and safety
- Provide timely addiction care
- Reduce repeated ED visits, and prevent withdrawal complications
- Reduce patients leaving against medical advice
- Support ED staff and simplify access to addictions expertise



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## What are we hoping to achieve?

- Faster, coordinated addictions care
- Better linkage to community treatment
- Reduce wait times for support
- A better patient experience across hospital

## How to Refer?

- Submit a consult request (verbal - in person or via the phone)
- The SUS team will review all referrals and screen all patients in the unit for involvement
- Physician + SW collaborate on medical & psychosocial care plan specific to substance use; while MRP and allied team remain involved
- SUS team supports follow up, discharge planning, and community connections specific to substance use

## Hours of Operation:

- During the pilot, the SUS team will be available Monday- Friday.
- Danielle will be dividing her time between this and her regular ED role and will triage referrals based on clinical need and Dr. Bedi's availability

## What happens if its off hours?

- Standard ED teams provide initial care (e.g. withdrawal management, stabilization), SUS team to support upon next business day if individual remains in ED

to health  
soars above.

